

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-16 (canceled)

17. (previously presented) A process for preparing fine zeolite particles comprising reacting a silica source with an aluminum source in the presence of an alkaline earth metal-containing compound in an amount such that an $\text{MeO}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ molar ratio is 0.005 to 0.1, wherein Me is an alkaline earth metal.

18. (previously presented) The process according to claim 17, wherein the alkaline earth metal is Ca and/or Mg.

19. (currently amended) A ~~The process for preparing fine zeolite particles of claim~~ 17 comprising feeding for reaction an aluminum source and/or a silica source into a circulating line connected to a reaction tank.

20. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the aluminum source and/or the silica source is fed into the circulating line connecting between an outlet of the reaction tank and an inlet of a mixer.

21. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19 or 20, wherein the aluminum source is supplied to the reaction tank and circulated into the circulating line, and wherein the silica source is fed into the circulating line.

22. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the aluminum source and the silica source are mixed in the circulating line at a mixing ratio of 0.1 to 3, as expressed by an $\text{SiO}_2/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ molar ratio.

23. (previously presented) The process according to claim 17, wherein the aluminum source and/or the silica source are fed for reaction into the circulating line connected to the reaction tank.

24. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the fine zeolite particles have an average primary particle size of $1.5\ \mu\text{m}$ or less.

25. (previously presented) The process according to claim 17, wherein the fine zeolite particles have the general formula in anhydride form:



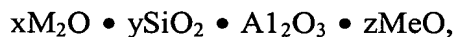
wherein M is an alkali metal; Me is an alkaline earth metal; x is a number of 0.2 to 2; y is a number of 0.5 to 6; and z is a number of 0.005 to 0.1.

26. (previously presented) The process according to claim 17, wherein the fine zeolite particles have a cationic exchange speed of $150\ \text{mg CaCO}_3/\text{g}$ or more.

27. (previously presented) Fine zeolite particles obtainable by the process according to the process of claim 17.

28. (previously presented) A detergent composition comprising the fine zeolite particles of claim 27.

29. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the fine zeolite particles have the general formula in anhydride form:



wherein M is an alkali metal; Me is an alkaline earth metal; x is a number of 0.2 to 2; y is a number of 0.5 to 6; and z is a number of 0.005 to 0.1.

30. (previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the fine zeolite particles have a cationic exchange speed of 150 mg CaCO₃/g or more.

31. (previously presented) Fine zeolite particles obtainable by the process according to the process of claim 19.

32. (previously presented) A detergent composition comprising the fine zeolite particles of claim 31.